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PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam President, members of the Legislature, in supporting the position of the Education Committee on this, let me point out one other thing that the Education Committee has done that doesn't address the central philosophic difference here, but I think which pertains to the issue of reorganization and which is helpful to the reorganization effort, and which represents a sensitivity of the Education Committee to what's going on in this area. It's not that we have not given a lot of consideration to how best to facilitate mergers and consolidations when individual school districts make that decision. But there is another bill and another concept that will come before you, before much longer in this session, called the Unified School Districts, which is a completely new and separate means of essentially having a trial marriage. In other words, several districts can get together and make an agreement. There's a lot of flexibility in what that agreement provides. And they can unify for a period of seven years, or less, if they break the unification agreement. But, if they unify for a period of seven years, then they will qualify for these very same incentive payments that are the subject of this fund that Senator Janssen is talking about. So, because unification is going to be a more appealing alternative, in many cases, to actual merger or consolidation, it is anticipated that there will be a whole...a significant number of efforts to unify as opposed to consolidate and merge. And that, as between all of these means of sharing resources, that there will be a much larger pull on the Incentive Fund. So, instead of encouraging people to double-dip, I think what the Education Committee has done makes some sense, and that is to try to broaden and encourage the number of people who have access to the Incentive Fund through the means of this unified school district concept. You'll hear more about that as time passes. I don't want to get into it, but I want to indicate that there will be another draw on this Incentive Fund, and that the Education Committee is making an effort to accommodate and facilitate merger and consolidation in yet another way. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Madam Lieutenant Governor, Senator Janssen,